

Message Text

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POUCHED INFO ALL CONSULATES IN CANADA

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, CA
SUBJ: REPORT RELEASED WHICH IS HIGHLY CRITICAL OF GOC
BILINGUAL POLICY

REF: OTTAWA 2929

1. IN MIDST OF OTHER PROBLEMS INVOLVING BILINGUALISM, ANOTHER HEADACHE HAS ARRIVED TO PLAGUE GOC: ON AUGUST 17 THE GOC-COMMISSIONED (IN 1974) BIBEAU REPORT WAS RELEASED. IT IS A MASSIVE AND EXPENSIVE STUDY OF THE GOC'S EFFORTS TO PROMOTE BILINGUALISM. REPORT SEVERELY ATTACKS THE GOC LANGUAGE TRAINING PROGRAM, CLAIMING THAT THE LANGUAGE NEEDS OF BILINGUAL JOBS HAVE NOT BEEN PROPERLY IDENTIFIED AND THAT TRAINING DOES NOT CORRESPOND TO THE REAL NEED OF PUBLIC SERVANTS. IT ALSO CLAIMS THAT TESTING IS INADEQUATE AND THAT MOTIVATIONAL EFFORTS ARE FAILING DISMALLY. IT RECOMMENDS AN ENTIRE REWORKING OF THE PROGRAM. ACCORDING TO ONE PRESS REPORT, A "PICTURE EMERGES OF A HASTILY CONSTRUCTED PROGRAM WITH LARGE NUMBERS OF YOUNG FRANCO-PHONE TEACHERS HIRED TO TEACH SCARED, MIDDLE-AGED ANGLOPHONES A LANGUAGE THEY MIGHT OF MIGHT NOT NEED". FROM WHAT ONE HEARS OF THE PROGRAM FROM OTTAWA AREA BUREAUCRATS, THAT IS NOT AN INACCURATE

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PICTURE.

2. REPORT IS DANGEROUS FOR GOC FOR SEVERAL REASONS, BUT MOST PROMINENT IS FACT THAT IT CLOSELY ECHOES MANY OF THE CHARGES MADE BY QUEBEC NATIONALISTS WHO CLAIM BILINGUALISM PROGRAM IS A FIASCO. THESE CRITICIZE, FOR EXAMPLE, THE LACK OF ANY UNI-LINGUAL FRANCH SECTIONS IN THE GOC; THIS REPORT SIMILARLY ASSERTS THAT FEDERAL PUBLIC SERVICE HAS TO ADAPT TO GIVE A STAKE WITHIN IT TO THE UNI-LINGUAL FRANCH SPEAKER. UNLESS IT DOES SO, SAYS THE REPORT, "CANADIAN BILINGUALISM WILL NOT HAVE ADVANCED A SINGLE STEP -- THAT IS, IN FACT, AT THE HEART OF THE CANADIAN PROBLEM". SUCH ATTACKS STRIKE AT THE VERY CORE OF THE GOC'S LANGUAGE POLICY -- AND THE ATTACKS COME NOT FROM RADICAL FRINGES, BUT FROM TRUDEAU GOVERNMENT'S SUPPOSED CONSTITUENCY, THE FRENCH SPEAKERS OF QUEBEC. AND TO TOP IT ALL, IN A REPORT COMMISSIONED BY THE GOC.

3. THE CHARGES OBVIOUSLY HIT A SORE POINT FOR, CONCOMITANT WITH THE STUDY'S RELEASE, TREASURY BOARD JEAN CRETEN AT A PRESS CONFERENCE REJECTED ITS MAJOR ASSERTIONS. HOWEVER, HE ALSO SAID THE GOC SHARES SOME OF THE CONCERNS AND INDICATED THAT A REVIEW WAS ALREADY UNDERWAY OF THE GOC'S BILINGUAL TRAINING PROGRAMS TO IMPROVE THEIR IMPLEMENTATION AND COST-EFFECTIVENESS. PUBLIC SERVICE POSITIONS WERE ALREADY BEING RE-APPRAISED IN TERMS OF THEIR LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS.

4. NOT SURPRISINGLY, THE OPPOSITION JUMPED ON THE ISSUE. CONSERVATIVE PARTY LEADER WALTER BAKER SAID THE REPORT CONFIRMED WHAT THE CONSERVATIVES HAD BEEN SAYING ALL ALONG, I.E., THAT THE GOC'S LANGUAGE PROGRAM HAD BEEN GOING TOO FAR TOO FAST. HIS SENTIMENTS WERE ECHOED BY THE PC'S LEADING MP FROM QUEBEC, CLAUDE WAGNER. THE PUBLIC SERVICE ALLIANCE GOT INTO THE ACT BY CRITICIZING THE REPORT AS A GOC EFFORT TO CUT BACK SALARIES OF THOSE WHO HAVE STUDIED THE FRANCH LANGUAGE AND WHO ARE CLASSIFIED AS BILINGUAL FOR PAY PURPOSES.

5. NO MATTER WHAT ELSE HAPPENS, ONE CAN BE ASSURED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THAT REPORT WILL HAVE BIGGEST EFFECT IN OTTAWA'S BUREAUCRATIC ENVIRONS. PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE PLEASED WITH EVEN MODEST RE-CASTING OF HIGHLY UNPOPULAR BILINGUAL PROGRAM. AND NATIONALLY, IT IS ANOTHER CHIP IN THE LIBERAL ARMOR, MORE EVIDENCE OF MISMANAGEMENT AND POOR GOVERNMENT ON THE PART OF THE TRUDEAU TEAM.
DUEMLING

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